

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-20 and insert the following as new claims 21-24:

21. An article of ready-to-assemble (RTA) furniture comprising:

a first component of the RTA furniture including a first panel having a closed slot extending along a substantial portion of the length of said panel;

a second component of the RTA furniture including a second panel having a portion with an edge, said portion configured to fit through and extend outward from said closed slot in said first panel, said second panel defining a notch offset inboard from said side edge for interconnecting with said closed slot in said first panel as said second panel is moved toward one end of said closed slot; and

a locking member configured to wedge between an opposite end of said closed slot and said portion of said second panel when said portion extends through said closed slot.

22. The article of RTA furniture of claim 21, wherein said locking member defines an edge and said locking member is configured to wedge between said opposite end of said closed slot and said portion of said second panel with said locking member edge substantially contiguous with said edge of said second panel.

23. The article of RTA furniture of claim 21, further comprising:

a third component of the RTA furniture including a third panel having a side edge and defining a notch offset inboard from said side edge, said notch

sized to receive a top edge of said first panel therein, said third panel including an extension defined between said side edge and said notch,

wherein said extension extends between said portion of said second panel and said locking member so that said locking member is wedged between said extension and said opposite end of said closed slot to lock said extension and said portion to said side panel.

24. The article of RTA furniture of claim 23, wherein said locking member defines an edge and said locking member is configured to wedge between said opposite end of said closed slot and said extension and said portion of said second panel with said locking member edge substantially contiguous with said edge of said second panel and said side edge of said third panel.

Consideration of this continuation application as amended is requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned agent of record if it is believed that a telephonic interview will help this application toward allowance.

September 15, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael D. Beck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'M'.

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COMPLETE LISTING OF PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 1-20: (cancelled)

Claim 21. (new) An article of ready-to-assemble (RTA) furniture comprising:

a first component of the RTA furniture including a first panel having a closed slot extending along a substantial portion of the length of said panel;

a second component of the RTA furniture including a second panel having a portion with an edge, said portion configured to fit through and extend outward from said closed slot in said first panel, said second panel defining a notch offset inboard from said side edge for interconnecting with said closed slot in said first panel as said second panel is moved toward one end of said closed slot; and

a locking member configured to wedge between an opposite end of said closed slot and said portion of said second panel when said portion extends through said closed slot.

Claim 22. (new) The article of RTA furniture of claim 21, wherein said locking member defines an edge and said locking member is configured to wedge between said opposite end of said closed slot and said portion of said second panel with said locking member edge substantially contiguous with said edge of said second panel.

Claim 23. (new) The article of RTA furniture of claim 21, further comprising:

a third component of the RTA furniture including a third panel having a side edge and defining a notch offset inboard from said side edge, said notch sized to receive a top edge of said first panel therein, said third panel including an extension defined between said side edge and said notch,

wherein said extension extends between said portion of said second panel and said locking member so that said locking member is wedged between said

extension and said opposite end of said closed slot to lock said extension and said portion to said side panel.

Claim 24. (new) The article of RTA furniture of claim 23, wherein said locking member defines an edge and said locking member is configured to wedge between said opposite end of said closed slot and said extension and said portion of said second panel with said locking member edge substantially contiguous with said edge of said second panel and said side edge of said third panel.